

TRIBUTE TO DEPUTY RICH OWEN

(Mr. HUTCHINSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, last November, deputies and employees of the Benton County Sheriff's Office in Arkansas voted Rich Owen Deputy of the Year. They selected him for the award, they noted, because of his outstanding professionalism and devotion to helping others. Within days of that vote, Deputy Owen died in the line of duty. He died from injuries he received in an auto accident while responding to a burglary call.

This week is National Law Enforcement Officers' Memorial Week, a time dedicated to the memory of heroes like Rich Owen, men and women who gave their lives serving and protecting others. I am at once proud and at the same time sad to pay tribute to these officers. I am proud that Arkansas has produced such courageous individuals as Deputy Owen, but I am sad that some have paid such an awful price for that dedication.

I would like to pay special tribute to Deputy Owen's son, Brandon, who is with me here today. And I offer my condolences to Brandon's mother, Frankie Owen, as well. These two stand as a constant reminder of the sacrifices not only our police officers pay every day, but their families as well. They stand here today as a reminder of the debt the rest of us owe to our law enforcement community. The courage we pay tribute to here today is not only that of the officers, but of their families as well. The sacrifices they make are great.

GENETIC INFORMATION NON-DISCRIMINATION IN HEALTH INSURANCE ACT

(Ms. SLAUGHTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, scientists recently announced a breakthrough in the treatment of cancer, one of the deadliest and most common diseases plaguing humanity. A combination of two drugs has been shown to prevent tumors from spawning the growth of new blood vessels that allow the tumor to grow.

The advances in genetic testing now allows us to pinpoint people who are at high risk for common cancers like breast cancer and colorectal cancer. Tragically, however, people are afraid to take those genetic tests that would allow them to take advantage of new anti-cancer drugs at the earliest possible phases of cancer. They refuse to take these tests because they fear genetic discrimination, especially in health insurance.

Congress could solve the problem by passing H.R. 306, The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Health Insur-

ance Act, which has 200 bipartisan sponsors. To date, however, we have not been able to get a schedule to vote on this proposal; and, as a result, Americans are forced to make a Hobson's choice between learning vital health information and risking their health insurance.

I urge my colleagues to demand a vote on H.R. 306 to protect all of our constituents against genetic discrimination and allow them to make health decisions based on sound medical facts.

FREEDOM FROM RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION ACT

(Mr. WOLF asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, today the House will vote on the freedom from religious persecution bill, which covers only cases of torture, enslavement, abduction, and death.

Noted Russian Jewish dissident Natan Sharansky said, "When the West stood up for its most basic values," as this bill does, "and spoke up for persecuted Soviet Jewish communities, Soviet chains around churches and political dissidents began to shatter."

Noted Chinese dissident Wei Jingsheng sent a letter yesterday and said, "If I did not see it myself, even I would not imagine the shameful and despicable means the Communists use against believers."

This bill gives the President total and complete waiver authority. Cardinal O'Connor of New York, in a letter yesterday said, "The Freedom from Religious Persecution Act could begin the desperately needed process of ending the legitimizing of such persecution."

Failure to pass the bill would send a message to all of the dictators all over the world that it is open season for people of all religious beliefs. I hope and I pray that this bill will pass with an almost unanimous vote.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

(Mr. KANJORSKI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today and perhaps I should ask for a moment of silence because the vote that was taken to table the privileged resolution from the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT) is a sad moment in the House of Representatives.

I have the distinct honor and pleasure of serving on the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight. The fact that we have had a difficult time in the administration of our mission over the last 18 months is evident to everyone in this Chamber and everyone in this Nation.

The privileged resolution would have given this House the opportunity to air the problems in that committee and to attempt to find a solution so that we

could move on in our mission of adequate investigation of financial and campaign finance violations of the 1996 election.

I think, as a result of our failure to use the debate process on that privileged resolution, we will find that May 14, 1998, by a vote of 223-196, this House has decided not to reform campaign finance but to start the political campaign of 1998.

FREEDOM OF RELIGION IN PAKISTAN

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on behalf of a person imprisoned because of his religious beliefs in Pakistan.

Recently, a Pakistani Christian, Ayub Masih, was sentenced to death under Pakistan's blasphemy law. In Pakistan, no one has yet been officially executed under the blasphemy law. However, extremists have killed a number of accused believers.

On May 6, 1998, human rights activist Bishop John Joseph allegedly committed suicide to protest the blasphemy law and Masih's death sentence. Although the Pakistani Constitution protects freedom of religion, the blasphemy law contradicts the constitution and a number of international human rights standards.

Mr. Speaker, every person, every country in the world should have this fundamental human right, the freedom of religion. I urge the Pakistani Government to acquit Mr. Ayub Masih and release him from prison with full protection of his rights and to protect him and his family.

TIME FOR CHAIRMAN BURTON TO STEP DOWN AS HEAD OF INVESTIGATION

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to decry the use of taxpayer funds for an investigation that has in fact turned into nothing more than a partisan political witch hunt.

According to yesterday's Washington Post, the investigation of the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) "began more than a year ago and has cost several million dollars," yet has "produced little information beyond what was disclosed during a similar investigation by the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee."

Meanwhile, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) has blatantly abused his power by unilaterally issuing over 500 subpoenas, releasing tapes of personal, private conversations and altering the content of those tapes to suit his own political purposes.

It is time to restore some integrity to this investigation. It is time to end

this waste of taxpayer money. It is time for the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) to step down as head of this investigation.

CHILD CUSTODY PROTECTION ACT

(Ms. ROS-LEHTIMEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, although we live in the world's greatest democracy, we also live in a society that, unfortunately, in the name of women's rights permits parents to be stripped of our inherent and sacred right, our right to parent.

H.R. 3682, The Child Custody Protection Act, will protect every parent's right to be a parent. It will prevent every parent from being stripped, deprived, and divested of our profound right to protect our young daughters from abortions and life-altering and life-threatening procedure.

Pro-abortion groups wrongfully claim a right to procure secret abortions for minors. But it is not up to a stranger to determine whether our daughters should have an abortion. The Congress and the American people will take a strong stand against the twisted notion that the Constitution somehow confers upon strangers a right to parent our children.

Together with Senator SPENCER ABRAHAM, our bill will be heard in committees next week and we hope that we can get even more cosponsors for our pro-family protection bill.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

(Mr. TIERNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TIERNEY. Mr. Speaker, campaign finance reform still is a critical issue confronting this House and needs to be addressed.

The Committee on Government Reform and Oversight had a particular opportunity to address this issue, to hold hearings, and to come up with some solutions and some facts that were a basis as to how we should proceed in that area.

So far, however, due to lack of leadership in that committee, we have been unable to embark on that process. We have had instead a very partisan hearing process, a fiscally irresponsible process, one that is motivated by personal vindictiveness not only of persons on the majority but also of their staff.

In fact, we have had a tremendous amount of incompetence in those proceedings that have cost the American taxpayers some \$6 million. New committee leadership is needed to restore credibility to that committee and dignity and credibility to this House.

It is a shame, Mr. Speaker, that the Members of the majority were unable to take the action that would allow us

to move in that process. It now is incumbent upon the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) as the head of that committee to realize that he can no longer function properly and to move that leadership to another member of that committee.

FREEDOM FROM RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION ACT OF 1998

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 430, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 430

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 1(b) of rule XXIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2431) to establish an Office of Religious Persecution Monitoring, to provide for the imposition of sanctions against countries engaged in a pattern of religious persecution, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on International Relations. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. In lieu of the amendments recommended by the Committees on International Relations, the Judiciary, and Ways and Means now printed in the bill, it shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of H.R. 3806, modified by the amendments printed in part 1 of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part 2 of the report of the Committee on Rules. Each amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against the amendments printed in the report are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, for the purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to my good

friend, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HALL), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, this rule, House Resolution 430, is a structured rule providing for the consideration of H.R. 2431, The Freedom from Religious Persecution Act of 1998. The admirable purpose of this legislation is to reduce the widespread and ongoing religious persecution taking place, unfortunately, in many places in the world today.

□ 1115

The rule provides for 1 hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on International Relations, which had primary jurisdiction over the legislation.

Because the bill was referred to five committees for their consideration, and three of those committees reported varying versions of the bill, a new bill for the purpose of amendment, H.R. 3806, was introduced last week.

The gentleman from New York (Mr. SOLOMON), chairman of the Committee on Rules announced on the House floor on May 7 that the bill, H.R. 3806, would be used as the base text for purposes of amendment. The rule, therefore, makes in order as an original bill for purposes of amendment an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of H.R. 3806 as modified by the amendments in Part 1 of the report of the Committee on Rules and provides that the amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read.

Mr. Speaker, this is a fair rule which allows for a broad range of amendments on a very narrowly focused bill. The goal of the bill is to combat religious persecution, and clearly all forms of persecution are to be condemned. But the crafters of this bill, as I stated, created a very focused religion-specific bill to make clear that we are focusing on one particular aspect of unacceptable persecution which must, must be combated.

Thus, the bill was not brought with an amendment, for example, from the distinguished gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WATT) who offered an amendment which would have expanded the scope of the bill to cover all forms of persecution prohibited by the Geneva Convention. It was felt by the framers of the legislation, however, that this bill, to have an opportunity to be considered and to have an opportunity for passage, should be framed as specifically and narrowly as it has been.

I believe that the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WATT), when he moves forward, if he does, with his concept, will get tremendous support on a bipartisan basis. I certainly would be supportive of the effort by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WATT), but I think that it is important to keep in mind what the purpose of this bill is.